

CLINTON, GORE SPEAK AT NATIONAL OCEAN CONFERENCE

AMID PLEDGES OF INCREASED FUNDING FOR OCEAN PROJECTS

The National Ocean Conference attracted over 500 Federal policy makers, scientists, and ocean enthusiasts to the two-day forum in Monterey, CA., on June 11th and 12th.

The conference, jointly sponsored by the Commerce Department, NOAA, and the Department of the Navy, brought both President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore to the shores of the Pacific to discuss how to protect the oceans, and to focus attention on new efforts to chart a sustainable future for them.

"In the 21st century, the world will look increasingly to the oceans for food, fuel, new medicines, and other resources," Vice President Gore said. "Already, we see troubling signs that marine resources are overstressed. We must be careful stewards and ensure the oceans are protected for all time."

The President and Vice President were joined by scientists, academics, environmentalists, business leaders and representatives of local, state and federal government, who gathered in Monterey to begin forming a common vision for the future of the ocean.

The National Ocean Conference, the first of its kind, was designed to achieve several goals, including demonstrating the interlinked nature of ocean issues, bringing together various interest groups to work together on common ocean interests, begin building a common vision for the future of the ocean, and encouraging greater public awareness of ocean issues.

The Conference's forum included discussions focusing on the ocean's role in commerce, global security, environment and health, the Law of the Sea Treaty and research, among other topics. A session with Congressional and state and local government officials, on the second day, was chaired by Commerce Secretary William Daley and Transportation Secretary Rodney Slater.

Later on the second day, in Monterey's seaside San Carlos Park, Vice President Gore, President Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton reiterated their commitment to the ocean and the environment.

"Through innovation and prudence, we've

proved we can clean the water, the air, protect marine sanctuaries and wildlife refuges, phase out deadly pesticides and ozone-eating chemicals, and do it while still producing the world's strongest, most competitive economy," the President said.

"With partnerships and persistence," he added, "we must extend this record of success to our oceans. If we want our children to inherit the gift of living oceans, we must make the 21st century a great century of stewardship of our seas."

They spoke to both the local audience and, by satellite, to rebroadcast sites in Washington, DC and NOAA's Silver Spring, MD, campus. The entire conference was also broadcast to computer users worldwide over the Internet.

The Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Dr. D. James Baker, in summing up the success of the National Ocean Conference, said: "The Conference launched a new era of partnership committed to the health of the sea. It significantly advanced our commitment to balanced use of our ocean and coastal resources. It energized support at all levels of government. And, very importantly, the conference widely educated, via downlinks, thousands of students and others across the country...."

"The substance of the ocean conference is a culmination of many years of dedicated effort in NOAA on every level. The success of the conference, the significant initiatives, and the follow-up will all help to show how NOAA can fulfill the promise of its mission," Dr. Baker said.--*Jerry Slaff, NOAA Public Affairs*

CONGRESSIONAL FORUM HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH NATIONAL OCEAN CONFERENCE

In conjunction with the National Oceans Conference, a Congressional Forum on the problems facing the oceans and marine environment was held on June 12th in Monterey.

Members who made appearances during the Conference included: Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), Rep. George Miller (D-CA)—who is also Ranking Resources Committee Democrat, Reps. Brian Bilbray (R-CA), Lois Capps (D-CA), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Dels. Eni Falemavaega (D-AS), and Robert Underwood (D-GU).

The Members discussed offshore drilling, the Oceans Act, ports modernization, El Nino, the National Marine Sanctuaries program, fisheries conservation, Nonpoint Source Pollution, and how the federal government can assist states in managing living resources.

NATIONAL OCEAN CONFERENCE RESULTS IN CALL FOR ACTION

The National Ocean Conference held June 11-12, 1998, in Monterey, California, resulted in President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore launching a series of major initiatives to explore, protect, and restore America's vital ocean resources. These measures will provide new scientific insight into the ocean, promote sustainable use of fisheries and other marine resources, open new opportunities for jobs and economic growth, preserve national security, and freedom of the seas, and help preserve our oceans for all time. The President and Vice President are proposing an additional \$224 million through Fiscal Year 2002 to support these efforts.

Protecting our Oceans from Offshore Oil Drilling. To protect our oceans and coasts from the environmental risks of offshore oil and gas drilling, the President is issued a directive extending the moratorium on offshore leasing for an additional ten years, and permanently barring new leasing in national marine sanctuaries.

Building Sustainable Fisheries. To restore America's fisheries, and sustain the coastal communities that depend on them, the Administration is announcing measures to reduce overfishing and protect essential fish habitats—including a ban on the sale or import of undersized Atlantic swordfish. The Administration is proposing an additional \$194 million over five years to speed implementation, and is calling on other nations to undertake similar efforts.

Ports for the 21st Century. To maintain competitiveness and ensure America's ability to safely handle the increase in ocean vessel traffic expected in the 21st century, the Administration is launching a ports modernization program financed by a proposed new Harbor Services Fund. The fund would raise \$800 million over the next five years to deepen and maintain shipping channels, improve navigation safety, and undertake other port projects.

Joining the Law of the Sea Convention. To maintain America's leadership in international ocean affairs, the President is calling on the U.S. Senate to recognize the breadth of support among all sectors of the U.S. ocean community for the Law of the Sea Convention, and to clear the way for the United States to join the Convention as a fitting celebration of the Year of the Ocean.

Protecting Coral Reefs. To strengthen protection of natural coral reefs in U.S. waters, President Clinton has signed an executive order directing Federal agencies to expand research, preservation and restoration activities. The President is proposing an additional \$6 million through 2002 to speed these efforts and complete restoration of 18 damaged reefs in the Atlantic, Caribbean and Pacific.

Exploring the Last U.S. Frontier. To unravel deep-sea mysteries, discover new opportunities in the ocean, and better understand how to protect marine resources, the Adminis-

tration is launching a program to map and explore U.S. ocean waters with advanced underwater technology. A proposed \$12 million through 2002 will be used to expand two shallow-water observatories, build two new deep-sea observatories, and develop two high-tech "submersibles" to explore exotic sea life. A new initiative will be launched in partnership with the National Geographic Society and Goldman Foundation to explore our National Marine Sanctuaries.

Protecting our Beaches and Coastal Waters. To help protect the Nation's beaches and coastal waters—as well as public health—the Vice President is announcing a new website listing beach advisories and closings, and a coordinated strategy to respond to toxic algal blooms. He and President Clinton are calling on the Congress to fully fund the Administration's Clean Water Action Plan.

Monitoring Climate and Global Warming. To better understand the role of oceans in shaping our weather and climate and to help address the threat of global warming, the Administration is announcing an expanded ocean monitoring system. The Administration is proposing an additional \$12 million through 2002 to place hundreds of monitoring buoys in the North Atlantic and North Pacific to measure critical ocean data.

Public Access to Military Data and Technology. To help increase our understanding of marine life, and to enhance weather forecasting and climate change research, and identify valuable ocean resources, the Administration is announcing the declassification and release of secret and restricted Navy data. The Department of Defense also will produce computer-based nautical charts replacing the paper charts used by mariners for centuries—a significant advance in marine safety.

SENATE JOINS HOUSE IN PASSING RESOLUTION ACKNOWLEDGING 1998 AS INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE OCEANS

On June 10th, one day before the start of the National Oceans Conference, the Senate joined in the House in passing HConRes 131, acknowledging 1998 as the International Year of the Ocean. The concurrent resolution was offered by Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME). It was unanimously adopted as amended on March 12th in the full Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee (Chairman John McCain, R-AZ). The substitute was introduced in Committee by Sens. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and John Kerry (D-MA). It added language urging increased international cooperation "to enhance oceanographic research and exploration," closer private sector cooperation, and encourage programs that "use education and the arts to increase public awareness of the ocean and the need to conserve and sustainably manage ocean resources."

The House passed HConRes 131 on November 13th by Unanimous Consent. It had been introduced on July 29, 1997, by Rep. James Saxon (R-NJ), Chairman of the House Resources Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee.

NOAA FY '99 APPROPRIATION

SENATE PASSES FY 1999 \$2.2 BILLION NOAA APPROPRIATION AS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMAN REAFFIRMS COMMITMENT TO "A FIRST-CLASS NOAA EFFORT"

The Senate by a 99-0 vote on July 23rd passed the Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 1999 Appropriations bill (S 2660/SRpt 105-235). The Senate provided \$2.199 billion which is above the Administration's Request of \$2.117 billion. The Senate provided \$3.5 million for the proposed Commission on Ocean Policy.

In his introductory remarks, Floor Manager and Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH) said "This committee is totally committed to being sure that we have a first-class NOAA effort. Clearly, in light of what we have seen from El Nino and other weather events in this country in recent times, it is absolutely critical that we have a strong Weather Service. And the need to expand our activity in the area of ocean activities is also equally critical."

"NOAA advises us that they are getting near to the ability to adequately forecast an El Nino type of event, and we intend to make sure they have the funds to accomplish that. In addition, this year's budget request includes the Advanced Hydrological Prediction System, which should assist in forecasting floods in the Missouri flood basin, an absolutely critical issue, as well as the Advanced Weather Interactive Processing System which the National Weather Service needs."

Ranking Appropriations Subcommittee Democrat, Sen. Ernest Hollings (D-SC) said: "the bill provides \$2.2 billion for NOAA, an increase of \$200 million over this year's funding level. Chairman Gregg and I have continued to work bipartisanship to keep a focus on our Oceans."

The South Carolina Democrat, who authored legislation to study national ocean policy (S1213) thanked Chairman Gregg for including \$3.5 million to fund the first year of operations of the proposed National Oceans Commission.

"Thirty-two years ago, Congress enacted legislation that created a national commission (Stratton Commission) whose ideas have shaped our ocean policy for almost thirty years. Resulting from the Commission was the creation of NOAA and enactment of such vital legislation as the Coastal Zone Management Act, and the Marine Sanctuaries program. This Commission-modeled after the successful Stratton Commission-will look at U.S. ocean and coastal activities and report within 18 months on recommendations for a national policy."

Sens. Hollings and Daniel Inouye (D-HI) paid tribute to Scott Gudes, formerly Minority Clerk to the Subcommittee, and now Deputy Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere. The Ranking Subcommittee Democrat credited Mr. Gudes with compelling the Subcommittee to consider funding for important initiatives such as the NOAA fleet modernization program and acquisition of a high-altitude hurricane reconnaissance aircraft for the National Weather Ser-

vice. "Scott is indeed a fine, fine person-NOAA is lucky to have him, and I expect to see his star shine for many, many years to come."

A Floor Managers amendment, adopted by the Senate, attached the National Whale Conservation Fund Act of 1998 (S 2172) to the appropriations bill. The bill, introduced by Chairman Gregg on June 16th, amends the National Fish and Wildlife Establishment Act to establish a national whale conservation endowment fund, to be used by the Foundation to support research, management activities, or educational programs that contribute to the protection, conservation, or recovery of whale populations in U.S. waters.

Another amendment offered by the Floor Managers, directs NOAA to fund Atlantic herring and mackerel studies, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and the Great Bay land acquisition.

Also adopted was an amendment offered by Michigan Senators Spencer Abraham (Rep) and Carl Levin (D) requiring NOAA to allocate \$50,000 for a study of sediment control at Grand Marais, Michigan. "Grand Marais is a quiet little town with a scenic harbor" along Lake Superior, near Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, according to the Grouptour website.

Also accepted was an amendment offered by Sen. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ) to increase funding by \$3 million for state coastal non-point source water pollution control activities proposed under NOAA's \$22 million Clean Water Initiative (CWI). Sen. Torricelli's amendment increased overall Senate funding for CWI to \$19 million. Senate funding levels for NOAA's two other cross-cutting initiatives -- the \$55 million Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative (NDRI) and \$5.1 million South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (SFERI) -- remained unchanged from the Senate Appropriations Committee recommendation of \$52.3 for NDRI and \$4.5 for SFERI.

Here are some of the NOAA related colloquys which were part of the debate:

--Sen. Robert Bennett (R-UT) received assurance from Chairman Gregg that the National Weather Service (NWS), as stated in Report language, could continue its preparations for the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City. NWS, Sen. Bennett said, will be assisting the NOAA Cooperative Institute at the University of Utah to develop a plan and budget to provide accurate weather forecasting for the games;

--Sen. John Chafee (R-RI) pointed to the numerous benefits of the \$1 million appropriated for a data survey of Narragansett Bay. It will particularly assist in identifying existing essential fish habitats.;

--Sen. Herb Kohl (D-WI) on the need for pathogen research related to ballast water through the National Sea Grant College Program. Chairman Gregg responded "that it is important to improve the state of understanding about the potential human health risks of pathogens that enter U.S. waters via ballast water, and that the Sea Grant College Program is an appropriate agency to conduct and facilitate such research";

--Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) clarified that it was the Teel Cove Sea Farm that was lead sponsor of the Maine joint marine aquaculture program. She also received an assurance from Chairman Gregg that the bill fully funds the Administration's request for funding of the Maine Atlantic salmon recovery plan.

HOUSE PASSES FY 1999 COMMERCE, JUSTICE, STATE FUNDING BILL, \$78 MILLION UNDER PRESIDENT'S REQUEST—AMENDMENT ACCEPTED TO INCREASE ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVES FUNDING BY \$1.0 MILLION

The House shortly after midnight on August 6th, passed the Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 1999 Appropriations bill (HR 4276/HRpt 105-636), which funds NOAA programs. The vote was 225-203. The bill funds NOAA at \$2.01 billion, \$78 million under the President's request for appropriations and \$7.7 million over Fiscal Year 1998 expenditures.

The floor managers, Chairman Harold Rogers, R-KY, and Ranking Democrat Alan Mollohan, D-WV, accepted an amendment offered by Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) that would increase funding for National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRS) by \$1.0 million with offset funding drawn from the Saltonstall-Kennedy Promote and Develop American Fisheries fund.

Defeated 158-267 was an amendment that would have increased funding by \$8 million for NOAA's non-point source pollution programs. It was offered by Rep. Frank Pallone (NJ), Ranking Democrat on the Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee. It was co-sponsored by Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), a senior member of the Resources Committee. The amendment was intended to fully fund the Clean Water Initiative by providing an additional \$7 million for states to develop and implement plans to control nonpoint source pollution. The amendment also would have made an additional \$1 million in coastal zone management grants to the three new states which have recently joined the program: Minnesota, Ohio and Georgia. Members speaking in favor of the amendment besides the co-sponsors, included: Reps. Walter Jones (R-NC), Lois Capps (D-CA), and Nita Lowey (D-NY). Vigorously opposing the amendment was the leadership of the Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Subcommittee, including Chairman Rogers, Ranking Democrat Mollohan, and Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO). Chairman Rogers said that the amendment cut both "critical" National Weather Service programs and construction funds for the new Santa Cruz fisheries laboratory. Ranking Member Mollahan said "we can ill afford to reduce" the weather service funds after already reducing its funding by \$90 million under the President's request.

The amendment was also opposed by the Administration because the \$15 million offset was from NOAA's critical Procurement, Acquisition and Construction account. The offset was twice the amount because of the need to balance outlays between the two accounts.

Also defeated 141-283 was an amendment offered by Rep. Sonny Callahan (R-AL) that would have extended stated re-

sponsibilities for fisheries enforcement for Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi by replacing the 14.6 kilometers provision just added to a substitute version of the bill with "three marine leagues," (or 14.92 km) which is the actual amount of state jurisdiction for Texas and Florida. A motion to strike language currently in the bill which extended state jurisdiction to 14.6 kilometers was offered by Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD) and adopted by voice vote to maintain the current 4.8 km limit for state jurisdiction for the three adjoining Gulf states. This unanimous action occurred after Rep. Callahan said he "accepted defeat with humility."

Speaking against the Callahan amendment were Rep. Jim Saxton (R-NJ), Chairman of the Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee, Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), Chairman of the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee, Rep. Gilchrest, and Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA). Chairman Boehlert, characterized the Callahan amendment as "undermining environmental protection."

Speaking in favor of the amendment were Louisiana Republicans Rep. Bob Livingston, Appropriations Committee Chairman, and Rep. Billy Tauzin, a long time opponent of federal requirements to require shrimpers to use Turtle Excluder Devices and related devices to reduce the red snapper bycatch.

Debate on the amendment was heated. Rep. Callahan alleged that Rep. Gilchrest had never visited the Gulf and by inference that he wasn't aware of the problems faced by Gulf shrimpers. He noted that the House was extending California state jurisdiction by 360 km for the Dungeness Crab.

Here are some of the NOAA-related colloquys:

—Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO) received assurance from Chairman Rogers acknowledging his concerns about adequate funding for NOAA's High Performance Computing and Communications Program (HPCC). The Colorado Democrat, who is leaving the House at the end of this session, and represents Boulder, said HPCC was "crucial to predicting long and short term weather disasters." Chairman Rogers said that he will try to accommodate the concern in conference;

—Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) also received assurance from Chairman Rogers regarding whether the Committee would look favorably on a \$600,000 National Marine Fisheries Service request to fund a seawater pumping and intake system for the Santa Cruz fisheries research laboratory to support live marine mammal research;

—Rep. Peter Deutsch (D-FL) asked Chairman Rogers if he would support in the conference the request of the National Ocean Service (NOS) for a coral reef monitoring program, as part of the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Initiative. Chairman Rogers pointed out that the Committee had provided \$2.6 million for this initiative, including \$1.3 million for the National Marine Fisheries Service. Without mentioning it by name, Chairman Rogers said he would be happy to look at the coral issues "as we move to conference with the Senate."

The House bill specifies \$644 million for the National Weather Service (NWS), including a \$31 million increase over Fiscal Year 1998 for National Weather Service operations, and continues funding for NWS modernization activities. However, this is \$20 million under the President's Request. The bill, also provides \$439 million for weather satellites.

The bill zeroes out Fiscal Year 1999 funding for the National Undersea Research Program (NURP) and the Global Observations to Benefit the Environment (GLOBE). The elimination of GLOBE funding was criticized in a Statement of Administration Policy (SAP), issued shortly before the floor vote. The Administration is also in favor of NURP funding and requested \$4.15 million for the program.

The SAP also criticized "inadequate" funding for the Clean Water Initiative, the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Act and the Climate and Global Change Program. Additionally, the SAP denounced reduced National Weather Service funding "threatens vital services."

NOAA PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

David Evans has been selected as the new Assistant Administrator for Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR). Dr. Evans previously served as Deputy Assistant Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service. Before joining NOAA he was program manager for the Physical Oceanography Program at the Office of Naval Research. He was also professor of oceanography at the University of Rhode Island, where he received his Ph.D.

Louisa Koch will become the Deputy Assistant Administrator for OAR, effective September 13th. Before joining NOAA, Ms. Koch worked at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) where she most recently was the Commerce Branch Chief. She earned a B.S. in Physics from Middlebury College and a M.S. from the Electrical Engineering Department at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Andy Rosenberg has succeeded Dr. Evans as Deputy Assistant Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service. He formerly was Northeast Regional Administrator for the agency. Before joining NOAA, Dr. Rosenberg was on the faculty of the Imperial College of Science in London. He received his Ph.D. from Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia.

John Jones has been named Deputy Assistant Administrator for the National Weather Service (NWS). He was formerly Deputy Regional Director for the Eastern Region Headquarters. He is also formerly Meteorologist-in-Charge of the Philadelphia (Cherry Hill, NJ) Forecast Office.

Susan F. Zevin has joined the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS) as Deputy Assistant Administrator for Environmental Information Services. She will oversee the NOAA National Data Centers, and Offices of Environmental Information Service and Information Technology Management. She is formerly with NWS.

Gregory W. Withee will continue as the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services and will oversee the Office of Satellite Operations, Systems Development, Satellite Data Processing and Distribution, Research and Applications and to provide day-to-day NESDIS Operations.

Helen M. Wood, director of the Office of Satellite Data Processing and Distribution, has received the Meritorious Presidential Rank Award. Ms. Wood directs the operation of a system that processes and distributes real-time data gathered by NOAA and other environmental satellites.

Troy L. Holcombe and **Lisa A. Taylor**, both of the National Geophysical Data Center in Boulder, CO, and **David F. Reid** of NOAA's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory have been honored by the International Association for Great Lakes Research for a paper they published in the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*. The scientists received the association's prestigious Chandler-Misener Award, which is presented annually to the authors of the paper judged to be most notable in the *Journal of Great Lakes Research*. Their paper, "Lakefloor Geomorphology of Western Lake Erie," presents a discussion of western Lake Erie geology, as revealed by new bathymetry that the authors compiled.

The paper includes a full-color bathymetric map of western Lake Erie. An international agreement between NOAA and the Canadian Hydrographic Service serves as the basis for U.S. and Canadian cooperative efforts to assemble new bathymetry for the four Great Lakes shared by the two countries.

ILLUSTRATED WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS OF NOAA-RELATED CONGRESSIONAL ACTIVITIES NOW FEATURED ON NOAA LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS HOMEPAGE. AVAILABLE MOST FRIDAYS WHEN CONGRESS IS IN SESSION

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LEGISLATIVE HAPPENINGS

HOUSE PASSES FISHING AGREEMENT WITH THE LATVIA WITH ATTACHMENT OF DUNGENESS CRAB CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT ACT

On August 3rd, the House passed by voice vote the Governing International Fishery Agreement (GIFA) with Latvia (HR 3460) along with an amendment incorporating provisions of the Dungeness Crab Conservation and Management Act (HR 3498). HR 3460 approves a specified international fishery agreement between the U.S. and Latvia. The bill will allow for the continuation of joint fishing ventures between Latvian and U.S. commercial fishing companies in the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). The bill also extends the authorizations of appropriations for the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act of 1995 and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act of 1975. In addition, this bill authorizes each of the States of Washington, Oregon, and California to adopt and enforce laws and regulations governing fishing and processing in the (EEZ) adjacent to that State in any Dungeness crab fishery for which there is no management plan in effect under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

A Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee hearing on HR 3460 was held May 19th and a markup was held June 4th, at which time the bill was reported to the full Committee. At a full Resources Committee (Chairman Don Young R-AK) markup on June 17th, an amendment to HR 3460 was introduced by Rep. William Delahunt (D-MA). The amendment (1) requires the Secretary of Commerce to annually report to Congress on the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO); and (2) directs the Secretary to develop a specific practice of allocating quotas. Rep. Delahunt said this provision is necessary because the current NAFO plan for allocating fish harvesting quotas is "secretive, unpredictable and has no mechanism for dealing with new member countries like the United States."

NAFO, located in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, includes 16 member countries and the European Union. The United States joined in November, 1995, 17 years after formation of the organization because of concerns over possible fishing restrictions which might be imposed by NAFO, particularly for vessels operating over the species rich Grand Bank, southeast of Newfoundland. Both Subcommittee Chairman Saxton and Ranking full Committee Democrat Rep. George Miller (D-CA) supported the amendment. The Committee reported HR 3460 and the amendment favorably by a voice vote.

The Dungeness Crab Conservation and Management Act (HR 3498) was introduced by Rep. Miller on March 18th. The bill was referred to the Resources Committee on March 18th and then to the Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans on March 23rd. On May 7th a Subcommittee hearing was held and Dr. David Evans, then Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, testified, accompanied by William L. Robinson from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northwest Region for technical support. NMFS

testified in qualified support of passage of HR 3498 as a unique solution to an unusual set of circumstances under the Magnuson-Stevens Fisheries Conservation Act. On June 4th the bill was favorably reported to the full Committee by voice vote.

On July 22nd, the Resources Committee held a markup session where Chairman Young offered an amendment to extend state regulatory power of the Red Snapper fishery in the EEZ to Southern States. Rep. Miller claimed that the amendment was not germane, and the amendment was withdrawn. The Committee favorably reported HR 3498 by voice vote.

A companion bill (S 1726) to HR 3498 was introduced in the Senate by Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) on March 6th and referred to the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation (Chairman John McCain, R-AZ). However, no further action has been taken on S 1726.

HOUSE RESOURCES REPORTS REVISED OCEANS ACT: AMENDMENT TO RESTRICT STUDY OF NEAR-SHORE ESTUARIES DEFEATED EXEMPTIONS FOR ALASKA AND IDAHO FROM STUDY BY OCEANS COMMISSION REMAIN IN BILL

The House Resources Committee Chairman Don Young (R-AK) on July 29th marked up and reported a substitute version of the Oceans Act of 1998 (HR 3445). The Committee adopted two amendments offered by Rep. W.J. "Billy" Tauzin (R-LA) -- one which changes the definition of "industry" to "ocean-related industry" and another which requires a draft copy of the Commission's report to go to the House Resources Committee (instead of just the coastal governors).

A third amendment adopted by the Committee was offered on behalf of Rep. Helen Chenoweth (R-ID). It exempts Idaho in addition to Alaska from the legislation.

The panel would study oceanic environments and review the policies and projects of the numerous agencies and departments with jurisdiction over non-military oceanic policy and research. It then would issue a biennial report outlining its recommendations to Congress beginning in 1999.

The bill calls for coastal states to be consulted during the report drafting; requiring the panel to consider economic impacts on ocean-related industries and private property holders; and peer review of the recommendations.

Rep. Tauzin offered an amendment, which was rejected 12-24, to eliminate near-shore estuaries from the commission's scope of inquiry. Rep. Tauzin feared that would give the panel authority to develop oceanic policy for states that have rivers flowing into coastal waters.

For example, he pointed out that from the mouth of the Mississippi River upstream for 146 kilometers is technically an estuary. However, Ranking Committee Democrat Rep. George Miller (CA) argued that estuaries are a part of the oceanic ecosystem and must be studied. "We can't ignore the interplay" of estuaries and the ocean, he said. Seven Republicans voted against Rep. Tauzin's amendment.

Rep. Tauzin then offered an amendment that would make Congress the sole oceanic policy-maker, removing the President's authority to appoint members to the panel. It failed 11-22.

The Senate passed its version of the bill (S 1213) on November 13th. The Senate Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Bill (S 2660/SRpt 105-235) which cleared the Senate on July 22nd, includes \$3.5 million to fund the first year operations of the Commission.

The House substitute bill limits the proposed Commission on Ocean Policy from making "any specific recommendations with respect to lands and waters within the boundary of any State located north of 51 degrees North latitude." The only state north of that latitude is Alaska. Excluding Alaska is likely to draw opposition because of the importance of the three oceans and seas it borders to the economy and ecology of the 49th State.

The amended bill also exempts "military operations and training" from the scope of the Commission. The substitute also adds a requirement that the 16 member Commission have at least one meeting in each of these geographic areas: Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, Great Lakes states, and Gulf of Mexico states.

The Administration is now reviewing the latest version of the bill and is expected to issue a Statement of Administration Policy soon.

SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE REPORTS NOAA AUTHORIZATION BILL INCLUDING HYDROGRAPHIC, NOAA CORPS, AND PRIBILOF ISLANDS LANGUAGE

On July 29th, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation (Chairman John McCain, R-AZ) marked up S 2360, the NOAA Authorization Act of 1998. The NOAA bill, as reported, authorizes most of the agency's programs for fiscal years 1999-2001, at or somewhat above levels requested by the Administration. It also incorporates as Title IV a version of HR 3164, the House-passed Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998. S 2360 authorizes the NOAA Corps at a level of not less than 264 nor more than 299 officers, for fiscal years 1999-2003. An amendment offered by Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK), called the Pribilof Islands Transition Act of 1998, was accepted without objection before the bill itself was reported favorably by a voice vote. NOAA generally supports the substantive authorizations in the bill while recognizing that in several cases that the authorized program funding levels exceed the Administration requested levels.

SENATE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORTS BILL TO RESTORE NATION'S ESTUARIES

At the July 22nd markup, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Chairman John Chafee, R-RI), reported S 1222, the Estuary Habitat Restoration Partnership Act of 1997. The bill aims to restore 400,000 hectares of estuarine habitat by the 2010. The bill would provide \$315 million until 2003 to support activities to restore damaged or destroyed estuary habitats and encourage better federal coordination, cost sharing and local involvement in restoration efforts. Under the bill, NOAA would be a member of a federal Estuary Habitat Restoration Collaborative Council which would de-

velop a national strategy for estuarine habitat restoration and initiate, coordinate and oversee restoration projects with State and local partners. NOAA would also be responsible for managing and maintaining estuary data for all projects. In general, NOAA supports the goals and intentions of the bill but has expressed concerns regarding the agency's role on the collaborative council and the absence of any authorizations for appropriations to archive and manage estuary data.

An additional title was added to the bill that focused on the Chesapeake Bay, implementation funding for the EPA's National Estuary Program (NEP), and creation of a *Pfiesteria* research grant program. The Chesapeake Bay provision combined two legislative proposals introduced by Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Act (S 618) and the Chesapeake Bay Gateways and Watertrails Act (S 619). Combined, these provisions would authorize \$165 million through 2003 for grants aimed at habitat restoration, pollution control and a system of watertrails linking federal and state parks, wildlife refuges and other noteworthy sites on the Chesapeake Bay. Under Sen. Robert Torricelli's (D-NJ) NEP bill (S 1321, the National Estuary Conservation Act), \$125 million would be authorized through 2003 to help states implement comprehensive conservation and management plans (CCMPs) at over 20 designated NEPs nationwide. A revised version of Sen. Lauch Faircloth's (R-NC) *Pfiesteria* research bill (S 1219, the *Pfiesteria* Research Act), was added to S 1222. This measure would provide \$5 million per year for two years to provide research grants to universities and colleges in areas affected by *Pfiesteria*. A more comprehensive harmful algal bloom bill (S 1480) introduced by Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME) and reported by the Senate Commerce Committee earlier in the month.

It was expected that over the summer recess staffs from both the Environment and Public Works and Commerce Committees would meet to begin negotiations to resolve jurisdictional and technical issues in S 1222 and S 1480.

PRESIDENT SIGNS BILL NAMING COMMERCE TO ADVISORY COMMISSION ON DROUGHT EMERGENCIES

The President on July 16th signed into law the National Drought Policy Act of 1997 (PL 105-199/HR 3035/S 222) The House passed the bill Under Suspension of the Rules on June 16th and it cleared the Senate by Unanimous Consent on June 24th. The legislation names the Commerce Department as one of 16 members of a National Drought Policy Commission.

The Commission, to be chaired by the Secretary of Agriculture, is to report to the President and Congress on what is needed to better prepare for drought emergencies at all levels of government, how such programs can be integrated with national policies, public education, and whether one federal agency should take the lead in establishing federal drought policies. The total economic losses to agriculture, energy, transportation and recreation tourism associated with the 1998 drought alone have been estimated at \$40 billion, according to Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY), chairman of the House Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee.

SENATE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE REPORTS NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION BILL AUTHORIZING \$5 MILLION ANNUALLY TO NOAA

The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee (Chairman John Chafee, R-RI) on May 21st reauthorized the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (S 2095/SRpt 105-224). The non-profit organization was created in 1984 to coordinate public and private resources to assist in the preservation and rehabilitation of the nation's natural resources. The bill was introduced by Chairman Chafee.

The bill would expand board membership from 15 to 20 members, expand the Foundation's jurisdiction, and authorize appropriations of \$30 million per year to the Department of Interior (Fish and Wildlife Service) and \$5 million per year to the Department of Commerce (NOAA) through FY 2003.

Significant changes from the House companion bill (HR 2376) include:

- a five-year reauthorization instead of a one-year authorization;

- language which would allow NOAA and Fish and Wildlife Service to make annual lump sum transfers of appropriated funds to the Foundation to ease and streamline Foundation fundraising;

- no prohibition on the Foundation from implementing or supporting activities related to grizzly bear and gray wolf reintroduction

- names the Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere as a director on the Foundation's Board of Directors not as an *ex officio* member.

It has not been determined when the bill might be taken up on the Senate floor.

FOURTEEN SENATORS, INCLUDING MINORITY LEADER, SIGN "DEAR COLLEAGUE" URGING FULL NOAA FUNDING FOR ADMINISTRATION'S NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTIVE INITIATIVE

In a May 21st "Dear Colleague" letter, 14 Senators have urged the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee with jurisdiction over NOAA programs to support the agency's \$55 million Fiscal Year 1999 request for the Natural Disaster Reduction Initiative (NDRI). Circulated by Sen. Max Cleland (D-GA), the letter is directed to Sens. Judd Gregg (R-NH) and Ernest Hollings (D-SC), Chairman and Ranking Democrat respectively.

The letter said: "In light of recent El Nino storms that have battered the Pacific coast, horrific tornadoes in the Southeast and the imminent arrival of the hurricane season, we believe that NDRI is a prudent, cost-effective investment towards reducing the loss of life and property due to natural resources now, and in the future."

"...NDRI will build on NOAA's strengths in research and operational forecasting and the agency's partnerships with emergency managers to provide local, state, federal and industry partners with better information on how to avoid, miti-

gate and minimize the impact of natural disasters, and ultimately, will save the Nation's taxpayers and the Treasury millions of dollars in damage and recovery costs."

Besides, Sen. Cleland, others signing the letter include: Minority Leader Tom Daschle (D-SD), Energy and Environment Committee Chairman Frank Murkowski (R-AK), Sens. Paul Coverdell (R-GA), Richard Durbin (D-IL), Wendell Ford (D-KY), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), Paul Wellstone (D-MN), Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Ted Kennedy (D-MA), Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Harry Reid (D-NV).

SENATE PASSES BILL ELIMINATING SIX CONGRESSIONALLY-MANDATED NOAA REPORTS

The Senate on June 10th, by unanimous consent, passed the Federal Reports Elimination Act of 1998 (S 1364), which permits NOAA to stop producing six out of the some 65 periodic reports now required by the Congress. The bill had been introduced on November 4th by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ). It was reported out of the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee (Chairman Sen. Fred Thompson, R-TN) on May 11th.

There is no counterpart House legislation.

The reports to be eliminated include: (1) pricing of nautical and aeronautical products; (2) National Shellfish research program; (3) Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite certification and report regarding technical performance specifications; (4) Next Generation Weather radar system certification and report regarding technical performance specifications; (5) enforcement of violations concerning the use of unenhanced data for commercial purposes; and (6) National Climate program activities.

HOUSE AND SENATE FY '99 DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION BILL INCLUDE 3.6 PERCENT COST OF LIVING INCREASE FOR NOAA CORPS OFFICERS

The House and Senate version of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1999 (HR 3616/S 2057) includes a 3.6 percent cost of living increase for the 240 members of the NOAA Corps, effective January 1, 1999. The Senate passed the bill on June 25th. The bill (HR 3616) passed the House on May 21st. Conference deliberations to resolve differences are expected to resume when the House returns after September 9th.

Because it is one of the seven uniformed services, NOAA Corps personnel rules, including pay increases, are authorized by the Defense Committees together with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the U.S. Public Health Service.

DR. BAKER ANNOUNCES NOAA CORPS RESTRUCTURING PLAN

On June 18th, the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Dr. D. James Baker, announced a plan for restructuring the NOAA Corps which proposed to "begin recruiting into the NOAA Corps a limited number of new recruits at the beginning of the next fiscal year." According to Dr. Baker the plan will "support a refocused NOAA Corps of 240 officers who will operate NOAA's current ships and air

craft, while still working with outside partners to contract for services.”

“The intent of this plan is to ensure that NOAA’s fleet operations are cost efficient, effective and responsive to the changing nature of federal, academic and industry partnerships. NOAA’s streamlining efforts over the past two years have already resulted in significant cost savings by reducing the number of officers nearly 30 percent since 1994,” Dr. Baker said.

The key elements of this plan are:

--Support a refocused NOAA Corps of 240 officers who will operate NOAA’s current ships and aircraft, while still working with outside partners to contract for services.

--Begin recruiting into the NOAA Corps a limited number of new recruits at the beginning of the next fiscal year.

--Place a Senior Executive Service member at the head of the of the Corps whose job will be to manage the Corps and partner with industry and academia to provide necessary service effectively and efficiently.

SEN. TIM JOHNSON PRAISES NOAA WEATHER RADIO AND URGES WIDESPREAD USE IN SOUTH DAKOTA

Sen. Tim Johnson (D-SD) and the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Dr. D. James Baker appeared jointly at a June 22nd press conference promoting NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) use in South Dakota. Senator Johnson praised the National Weather Service (NWS) efforts at getting timely warnings out via NWR and encouraged South Dakotans to purchase the NWR receivers so they can be warned in advance of severe weather. Sen. Johnson also encouraged local communities without NWR transmitters to pool their resources so they can purchase one thereby increasing the NWR coverage in South Dakota.

Prior to the press event, Senator Johnson and staff met with Dr. Baker and staff to explore ways to increase NWR coverage across the state. Dr. Baker emphasized NOAA’s policy of using public-private partnerships whereby non-federal groups purchase NWR transmitters with NWS maintaining the equipment. Sen. Johnson referred to the 1994 NWS study on NWR expansion and was briefed on the recent updates to that plan. The briefing included an outline of how NWR works with the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to warn an area by county rather than a tone alert for the entire NWR coverage area.

Sen. Johnson and Dr. Baker also discussed the National Disaster Reduction Initiative (NDRI). Dr. Baker emphasized that many of the NWS initiatives within the NDRI are designed to convey information about potentially devastating situations to avert disaster.

OCEANIC HAPPENINGS

UNITED STATES CALLS FOR MORE RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE THAT IMPACTS WHALE STOCKS; U.S. RESOLUTION SETS STAGE FOR FUTURE INTERNATIONAL WHALING COMMISSION RESEARCH

The United States succeeded in expanding the long-term vision and research efforts of the International Whaling Commission by successfully sponsoring a resolution that will improve knowledge about the potential threats to whales caused by global change in the marine environment. The U.S. Delegation offered the resolution at the 50th annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) held in Muscat, Oman from May 16th-20th.

Under the Resolution on Environmental Changes and Cetaceans, which was approved by consensus, scientists and policy makers from 40 member nations will review annual research on the impacts of environmental change on whales and other marine mammals during the newly established standing agenda item on environmental concerns. The action directs Commission scientists to place a higher priority on non-lethal research on environmental threats and urges them to collect and share this information with other scientific bodies.

“We cannot ignore changes in climate, pollution, and habitat that are affecting the marine environment and threatening the health and sustainability of the world’s whale stocks,” said Dr. D. James Baker, U.S. commissioner to the IWC and Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere. “While the Commission annually reviews the conservation and protection of whale populations, we could do more to study the potential detrimental impacts that environmental change is having on the ocean habitat and the animals themselves. Appropriately during this International Year of the Ocean, this new Commission focus on environmental change will help us move into the next century with a better understanding so we can address adverse global changes affecting whale populations.”

“While we debate the limits that should be placed on whaling activities in order to protect the status of the stocks, a silent menace threatens to destroy the populations we strive to protect,” added Dr. Baker.

According to IWC scientists, there is no doubt that the world of the whales is in trouble. The past ten years have seen increasing mortality of whales and other marine mammals around the world. It is difficult to determine the causes of these events, but scientists believe the health of whale stocks is linked to major environmental threats posed by climate change, increases in chemical contaminants, and habitat degradation.

“We must determine the extent and causes of the stresses and pressures on our oceans so further damage can be avoided, areas already harmed can be restored, and wise long-term management practices can be put into place,” said Dr. Baker.

Established to regulate the whaling industry and help conserve whale stocks, the 40-member International Whaling Commission was recognized at the 1992 U.N. Conference on Environment and Development in Rio as the sole international body with the responsibility to manage whale stocks. The Commission set a moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986.

NOAA SUBMITS LONG-RANGE PRESERVATION PLAN FOR USS *MONITOR* TO CONGRESS

On June 3rd, NOAA submitted the final version of a Congressionally-ordered study on strategies to preserve the Civil War-era USS *Monitor* in view of the inevitable collapse of its deteriorating hull. NOAA is currently surveying and mapping the shipwreck to help prioritize short- and long-term stabilization and possible select recovery efforts. "We are surveying the shipwreck and gathering vital information for implementing the next phase of planning and preservation," said John D. Broadwater, *Monitor* Sanctuary manager. The *Monitor*, a National Historic Landmark, is one of the most significant ships in U.S. history, famous for the battle with the Confederate ironclad *Virginia*. In recognition of the *Monitor*'s unique historical and archaeological significance, the Secretary of Commerce designated this site as the nation's first national marine sanctuary in 1975. The shipwreck currently lies in about 76 meters of water about 25 kilometers off Cape Hatteras, NC.

This comprehensive plan reflects new data from recent dive expeditions the Sanctuary as well as recent deepwater technological advances. The resulting plan is critical to NOAA's ultimate determination as to the final fate of the *Monitor*. In addition, it will aid NOAA in managing, protecting and assessing shipwrecks in other active and proposed sanctuaries. The plan recommends physical shoring of the deteriorating hull combined with selective recovery of major components of the ship, such as the engine, turret, and propeller as well as numerous other small artifacts.

NOAA, SEN. BREAUX DEDICATE LOUISIANA WETLANDS CREATION PROJECT BIG ISLAND PROJECT CREATES 360 HECTARES OF NEW WETLANDS.

A massive two-part wetlands creation project is nearing completion in the Atchafalaya River delta, as federal and state partners gathered on July 1st to dedicate the site, NOAA announced.

When completed, the Big Island and Atchafalaya Sediment Delivery Projects will immediately create over 360 hectares of wetlands by careful placement of dredged sediment, with another 1,200 hectares created through natural processes over the next 20 years. The two projects are located in the Atchafalaya River delta about 28 kilometers southwest of Morgan City, LA.

"These projects are yet another example of the Administration's efforts to restore America's fisheries and sustain the coastal communities that depend on them," said Commerce Secretary William M. Daley. "Louisiana wetlands supply habitat for many marine species and are an essential part of the commerce in that region."

"The Big Island and Atchafalaya Sediment Delivery Projects are perfect examples of the real value of the Breaux Act," said Sen. John Breaux (D-LA), who has been instrumental in securing approximately \$40 million per year in federal funding for the Louisiana wetlands protection and restoration projects approved by the Coastal Wetlands Planning Protection and Restoration Act Task Force.

Project engineers are constructing channels (with a combined length of about 14,500 meters) that will distribute sediment over a wide area on both sides of the main shipping channel. Dredged material is then formed into a flat pattern that mimics a natural delta, creating a natural distribution system to transport water and sediment throughout the reaches of the project area.

Jack Caldwell, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), said, "NOAA continues to demonstrate its focus on implementation of projects. This is of major importance to Louisiana, a state losing up to 56 square kilometers of coastal wetlands a year. The Big Island work has allowed us to raise the bar and set new standards throughout the world in the area of coastal wetlands restoration."

"Louisiana and the entire nation benefit from the Breaux Act and Big Island is proof of that," said Katherine G. Vaughn, Louisiana DNR assistant secretary for the Office of Coastal Restoration and Management. "NOAA continues to be an outstanding partner for Louisiana, showing a strong commitment to efficiency, while adapting to the needs of the state and the private sector."

Already, marsh grass and other vegetation are beginning to grow on the newly created lands. Alligators and numerous species of birds - including ducks, roseate spoonbills, black terns and American egrets have been observed using the new delta islands. Several species of fish also have been seen in waters adjacent to the new islands.

BIOTOXIN IN HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF SEIZURING SEA LIONS OFF MONTEREY COAST

Biologists from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and National Ocean Service (NOS) found that a natural biotoxin caused by a harmful algal bloom resulted in the death of more than 50 California sea lions in the Monterey area in May, NOAA announced on June 29th.

In animals, the harmful biotoxin called domoic acid affects the nervous system, causing seizures and vomiting which can also lead to death. NMFS and the NOS are continuing to track this harmful algal bloom and have detected it in other areas off the California coast. Researchers from the University of California, California state laboratories, Colorado State University and NOAA's Seattle and Charleston laboratories will continue to collect and analyze samples to confirm the presence of domoic acid in water, fish and other marine life.

From May 21st-31st, nearly 80 adult and juvenile California sea lions washed ashore in obvious physical distress along the coast from Santa Cruz south to San Luis Obispo.

REP. FARR, DR. D. JAMES BAKER AND OTHER DIGNITARIES BREAK GROUND FOR NEW SANTA CRUZ MARINE FISH RESEARCH LABORATORY

On June 10th, one day before the opening of the National Oceans Conference, Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA), the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Dr. D. James Baker, and the Assistant Administrator for Fisheries Rolland Schmitten dedicated the new \$19.4 million state-of-the-art fish research facility in Santa Cruz. Rep. Farr, a member of the House Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Resources Subcommittee, represents Santa Cruz in the House. The lab will replace an obsolete facility in Tiburon, CA, just north of San Francisco.

"What a better way to open the National Ocean Conference than to break ground for a world-class marine lab," said Rep. Farr. "This fisheries service lab is one of more than 20 venerable institutions that call the Monterey Bay area home. Their presence here underlines the importance of the oceans to the economic and environmental well being of our community and the world."

"This new laboratory includes a seawater system to provide our scientists the tools to study crucial salmon and rock-fish biology and population dynamics along with other important environmental research," said Mr. Schmitten. "Once completed in early 2000, the new lab will employ more than 40 fisheries scientists and staff."

COMMERCE SECRETARY DALEY APPLAUDS A LANDMARK SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT FOR THE REMOVAL OF MAINE'S EDWARDS DAM

A landmark agreement has been reached between private industry, environmental groups, and federal, state and local governments to remove Edwards Dam and to restore fish runs in the Kennebec River, Secretary of Commerce William M. Daley announced on May 26th.

"This comprehensive settlement will allow the restoration of a wide range of fish species to their historical spawning grounds in the Kennebec, including every species of sea-run fish that is indigenous to the northeastern United States," said Secretary Daley. "It reflects a true partnership between the public and private sectors that will lead to more fish in the Kennebec River and greater economic benefits for Maine."

Many such dams, built in the early eighteen hundreds, have contributed to a drastic reduction of anadromous fish populations by blocking access to historic spawning grounds. The removal of this dam will permit runs of Atlantic salmon, American shad, alewives, blueback herring, striped bass, rainbow smelt, Atlantic sturgeon, and endangered shortnose sturgeon to access prime spawning areas and begin the rebuilding process. These growing stocks will provide expanded opportunities for commercial and recreational fisheries in the Kennebec River.

The settlement requires Edwards Manufacturing Company and the City of Augusta to surrender the dam to the state. The state will use funds from two principal sources to remove the dam. A group of hydropower dam operators, the Kennebec Hydro Developers Group, will pay \$4.75 million in exchange

for postponing the installations of fish passages at upstream dams. The need for passage at these dams has been delayed from previous schedules because of the blockage created by the Edwards Dam. Also, Bath Iron Works will pay \$2.5 million towards dam removal as compensation for a shipyard expansion project that involves dredging and filling on the lower Kennebec.

DUTCH HARBOR-UNALASKA IS NATION'S TOP FISHING PORT FOR 1997--VIRGINIA FISHING PORT RANKED SECOND FOR FIRST TIME IN 50 YEARS

Commercial fishermen brought 267.1 billion kilograms of fish, worth \$122.6 million, to the port of Dutch Harbor-Unalaska, Alaska, in 1997 -- making it the port with both the highest volume and greatest dollar value of fish in the country, NOAA announced on August 10th.

Officials at NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service said the port of Dutch Harbor-Unalaska netted the top landings slot for a tenth straight year. Reedville, VA was ranked as the number two port in volume for the first time in the fifty year history of ranking the nation's top fishing ports. Reedville had not been part of the ranking since 1978 because disclosure of landing totals would have revealed confidential data of the only two private enterprises in that port. However, the companies have recently merged and have now consented to releasing the data, which puts Reedville back into the ranking and bumped Ketchikan, AK out of the top ten.

Landings at Dutch Harbor-Unalaska were valued at \$122 million, a decrease of \$26 million from the 1994 value. New Bedford, MA was second in value with landings at \$22 million less than that of Dutch Harbor, while the Kodiak, AK catch value was third at \$89 million in 1997.

The top 10 leading U.S. ports in volume and value of fish and shellfish landed in 1995, 1996 and the latest statistics of 1997 are:

1997 VOLUME

(FIGURES ARE IN MILLIONS OF KILOGRAMS)

Dutch Harbor--267.1; Unalaska, 223.5; Reedville, VA, 179.9; Empire-Venice, LA, 179.9; Cameron, LA, 172.5; Seattle, 152.7; Kodiak, 126.1; Intercoastal City, LA, 123.0; Morgan City-Berwick, LA, 101.3; Los Angeles, 76.4; Pascagoula-Moss Point, MS, 74.8.

1997 VALUE

(FIGURES ARE IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

Dutch Harbor-Unalaska, 122.6; New Bedford, 103.2; Kodiak, 88.6; Empire-Venice, 57.8; Key West, 54.9; Honolulu, 53.7; Point Judith, RI, 47.6; Brownsville-Port Isabel, TX, 46.1; and Portland, ME, 43.2.

FISHERIES SERVICE CERTIFIES TWO ADDITIONAL BYCATCH REDUCTION DEVICES

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has certified two additional bycatch reduction devices for use in the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery, NOAA has announced. The Jones-Davis and Gulf fisheye bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) are intended to help Gulf shrimp fishers more easily comply with the requirement to use BRDs while retaining more than 96 percent of the shrimp they catch.

Shrimpers can now select a BRD based on how it matches the operating conditions their vessel encounters," said Andrew Kemmerer, administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service's Southeast Region. "These BRDs should enhance compliance, help minimize shrimp loss and further reduce bycatch."

Shrimp trawling results in a significant, inadvertent bycatch of non-target finfish and invertebrates, most of which are discarded dead. Recent concerns about bycatch in the Gulf have focused on the high mortality of juvenile (ages 0 and 1) red snapper, a valuable reef fish species for commercial and recreational fisheries.

COMMERCE SECRETARY DALEY ANNOUNCES REGIONAL FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

Commerce Secretary William M. Daley announced on June 19th, the appointment of 19 members to eight regional fishery management councils that work in partnership with the federal government to manage the nation's marine fishery resources.

The councils, established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, prepare fishery management plans for marine fish stocks in their respective geographical areas of responsibility. The management plans are submitted for review by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and approved by the Secretary of Commerce.

Council members are appointed to three-year terms and may serve no more than three consecutive terms. Each year about one-third of the 70 voting members appointed to obligatory and at-large seats complete their terms. Selections are made to replace outgoing members from candidates nominated by the governors of the affected states.

The councils represent diverse fisheries interests and are composed of members whose combined knowledge and experience represent a balance of commercial and recreational fisheries interests for each geographical area concerned. The new council members terms began on August 11th and will expire August 10, 2001.

Note: * indicates the individual is being re-appointed.

New England Council — The New England Council includes members from the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. The 1998 appointees are for three seats: New Hampshire's obligatory; 2 at-large:

Obligatory seat

Erik S. Anderson*, President, New Hampshire Commercial Fishermen's Association, Portsmouth, NH

At-large seats

William H. Amaru*, South Orleans, MA

James D. O'Malley*, Executive Director, East Coast Fisheries Foundation, Narragansett, RI.

Mid-Atlantic Council — The Mid-Atlantic Council includes members from the states of New York, New Jersey, North Carolina, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. The 1998 appointees are for four seats: Delaware's obligatory; three at-large:

Obligatory seat

Ronal W. Smith, Lewes, DE

At-large seats

William S. Wells, III, Manager, Wells Scallop Company, Seaford, VA

Charles E. Bergmann, II*, Cape May, NJ

James H. Gilford*, Frederick, MD

South Atlantic Council — The South Atlantic Council includes members from the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The 1998 appointees are for two seats: North Carolina's obligatory and South Carolina's obligatory:

Obligatory seats

Jodie E. Gay*, Hampstead, NC

Charles W. Stone*, Murrells Inlet, SC

Caribbean Council — The Caribbean Council includes members from the U.S. Virgin Islands and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The 1998 appointee is for one at-large seat:

At-large seat

Joseph A. LaPlace*

St. Thomas, VI

Gulf of Mexico Council — The Gulf of Mexico Council includes members from the states of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. The 1998 appointees are for three seats: Mississippi's obligatory and Texas' obligatory; 1 at-large seat:

Obligatory seats

Ralph D. Horn, Vice-President, Clark Seafood Co., Inc., Pascagoula, MS

Irby W. Basco*, Nederland, TX

At-large seat

Alex M. Jernigan, P.E., Yankeetown, FL

Pacific Council — The Pacific Council includes members from the states of California, Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The 1998 appointees are for 2 seats: Idaho's obligatory; one at-large seat:

Obligatory seat

Jack T. Barraclough, Idaho Falls, ID

At-large seat

Roger Thomas, President, Golden Gate, Fishermen's Association, San Francisco, CA

North Pacific Council — The North Pacific Council includes members from the states of Alaska and Washington. The 1998 appointees are for Alaska's two obligatory seats:

Obligatory seats

Linda E. Behnken*, Sitka, AK

Kevin B. O'Leary*, Kodiak, AK

Western Pacific Council — The Western Pacific Council includes members from the state of Hawaii, the American-flagged Pacific islands of American Samoa and Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The 1998 appointees are for two at-large seats:

At-large seats

Frank W. McCoy, Sr., Pago, AS

Thomas C. Webster*, Kaneohe, HI

ATMOSPHERIC HAPPENINGS

SPRING WRAPS UP WARM, WITH AREAS OF EXTREME PRECIPITATION; LA NIÑA TO IMPACT FALL AND WINTER WEATHER WASHINGTON, DC CAN EXPECT MILD WINTER

After a spring influenced by El Niño, forecasters at NOAA are predicting that La Niña conditions are developing and are likely to influence fall and winter weather patterns.

La Niña features colder than normal sea surface temperatures in the tropical Pacific Ocean. La Niña often implies drier than normal conditions in the Southwest in late summer, the Southwest and central Plains in the fall and the Southwest and Southeast in the winter. In contrast, the Pacific Northwest is more likely to be wetter than normal in the late fall and early winter with the presence of a well-established La Niña. Additionally, on average La Niña winters are warmer than normal in the Southeast and colder than normal in the Northwest.

"There was a rapid cooling of sea surface temperatures in sections of the equatorial Pacific during May as El Niño conditions rapidly dissipated," said Vern Kousky, research meteorologist with NOAA's Climate Prediction Center in Camp Springs, MD. "The cooling trend is likely to continue with the development of La Niña conditions during the next three to six months. We expect that La Niña will be impacting weather patterns around the globe this fall and into next winter."

The long-term climate outlook issued by NOAA calls for warm and dry conditions in the Southwest during September, and these are forecast to continue through the fall and winter. This is of particular concern because the area encompassing Arizona, New Mexico, and much of Texas is already quite dry. The Gulf coast states to east of Texas, also currently quite dry, are forecast to have normal chances of precipitation for the balance of the summer.

The outlooks are also for cool conditions in the northern Great Plains, and dry conditions in interior Washington and Oregon during September. The dryness forecast for the Southwest is expected to also extend into the central Great Plains in the fall and later into the Southeast in the late fall and winter. As implied earlier, wet conditions are expected in the Pacific Northwest in the fall and early winter with the same regions experiencing a colder than normal winter. The long-term climate outlook issued by NOAA calls for warm and dry conditions in the Southwest during September, and these are forecast to continue through the fall and winter. This is of particular concern because the area encompassing Arizona, New Mexico, and much of Texas is already quite dry. The Gulf coast states to east of Texas, also currently quite dry, are forecast to have normal chances of precipitation for the balance of the summer.

ONGOING LA NIÑA CONDITIONS IN THE TROPICAL PACIFIC OCEAN ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE ATLANTIC HURRICANE ACTIVITY

There is an increased likelihood of above-average tropical storm and hurricane activity over the North Atlantic during August-October 1998 in response to ongoing La Niña conditions, according to an outlook issued August 7th by the National Weather Service, with an increased likelihood of more hurricanes reaching major hurricane status.

Dr. D. James Baker, Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, provided the outlook to representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Florida business and civic leaders during a FEMA-sponsored "Hurricane Damage-Prevention Roundtable" at Deerfield Beach, FL.

**BOOKMARK THE NOAA LEGISLATIVE
AFFAIRS HOMEPAGE FOR CONTINUOUS
UPDATES ON NOAA RELATED
LEGISLATION:**
[HTTP://WWW.LEGISLATIVE.NOAA.GOV](http://WWW.LEGISLATIVE.NOAA.GOV)

Vice President Gore, FEMA Director James Lee Witt and Florida Governor Lawton Chiles were among those whom Dr. Baker addressed at the hurricane preparedness event. "We are very confident that the La Niña conditions that began developing earlier this summer will increase hurricane activity at the height of the season," said Dr. Baker. "Regardless of the predictions, we encourage residents to always be prepared."

The average number of systems reaching tropical storms, hurricane and major hurricane status during August - October is seven, five and two, respectively. During La Niña episodes, the continental United States oftentimes experiences more than usual land falling hurricane activity. The Caribbean region is also far more at risk of experiencing a hurricane during La Niña episodes than at other times.

"This outlook represents our confidence in the current La Niña predictions and the impact on hurricane activity," said Gerald Bell, research meteorologist at the Climate Prediction Center. "This is the first step in developing official predictions of seasonal hurricane activity. Much work remains to refine these outlooks for more details to guide emergency managers and other users on preparedness efforts."

The outlook should be used as a guide of overall expected activity for the Atlantic basin and does not give any indication of whether a particular locality will be impacted by a tropical storm or hurricane.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE ANNOUNCES NEW DATA SHOWING JULY 1998 WAS HOTTEST MONTH ON RECORD

Vice President Al Gore announced new data on August 10th showing that July 1998 was the hottest month on record.

"Every month this year has set a new record for average global temperature for that month, and July was the hottest of any month in nearly 120 years," Vice President Gore said. "Scientists say we are warming the planet and, unless we act, we can expect even more extreme weather -- more heat waves, more flooding, more powerful storms, and more drought."

The new data, from NOAA's National Climatic Data Center, shows that July 1998 set a new record for global temperature, making it the hottest month since reliable records began in 1880. The average global temperature for July was 16.5 degrees Celsius, 0.7 degrees C higher than the long-term average for July, and 0.25 degrees C higher than the previous record, set in July 1997.

The announcement continues this year's record-breaking heat trends -- each of the first seven months have set a new global temperature record for that month, following 1997, which was the warmest year on record. This summer is the warmest on record for Texas, Louisiana and Florida. In Dallas, temperatures rose above 37.8 degrees Celsius 29 days in a row.

VICE PRESIDENT GORE HIGHLIGHTS NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ALERT EFFORTS

In two new Public Service Announcements (PSAs) available by satellite feed June 16th, Vice President Al Gore encouraged Americans to use NOAA Weather Radio receivers with built-in alarms to get immediate severe weather information and warnings direct from National Weather Service.

The Vice President's topic is a timely one with all of the severe weather the United States has experienced recently. The PSAs emphasize the value of NOAA Weather Radio, a severe weather warning system that can help keep everyone safe 24 hours a day.

In the PSAs, the Vice President explained that the National Weather Service uses its network of more than 460 broadcast transmitters to issue severe weather and flood watches and warnings, and other local emergency messages.

NOAA'S GOES-10 WEATHER SATELLITE ARRIVES AT NEW POSITION AND REPLACES GOES-9 IN ORBIT

NOAA has announced that one of NOAA's weather satellites, GOES-9, is failing as it reaches the end of its planned life, but the GOES weather satellite data and imagery seen daily on TV weather forecasts will continue to flow without a break. The smooth transition is due to a decision to store a backup weather satellite on orbit to quickly replace a failing one.

NOAA's GOES-10, the nation's newest geostationary weather satellite, which was put into a storage orbit and completed operational testing in June, began moving westward to 135 degrees West at 1 degree per day beginning on July 21st from its previous position over the central United States (105 degrees West). GOES-10 arrived at its new position on August 21st.

"Having a GOES satellite stored in orbit ready to back up the other two GOES satellites turned out to be an excellent idea," said Gerald Dittberner, NOAA's GOES program manager. "It's the first time we had ever had a backup satellite in place. Without such a satellite, we would have had to wait as much as 12 to 15 months to get a launch time slot. Now we can have GOES-10 transmitting data within 72 hours after activation, meeting our program needs without any loss in data continuity." Both GOES-8 and GOES-9 were the first in a new series of satellites and had projected planned lifetimes of three years. GOES-8, launched four years and two months ago, continues to function with no significant changes in the past 18 months. GOES-9, launched in May 1995, had reached its projected planned life. The planned mission life for GOES-10 is five years. The next satellite in the series, GOES-L, is scheduled for launch in May 1999 and will be stored in orbit.

NOAA's new GOES series has produced an excellent set of real-time weather data for weather forecasters and researchers. The result has been better warnings of thunderstorms, winter storms, flash floods, hurricanes, and other severe weather help to save lives, preserve property, and benefit commercial interests.

NOAA PLAYS MAJOR ROLE IN RESCUE OF BALLOONIST

An emergency signal from U.S. hot-air balloonist Steve Fossett's emergency beacon was first detected by the international Cospas-Sarsat system, NOAA announced on August 18th. Mr. Fossett's balloon had fallen into the southern Pacific Ocean during a severe storm while he was attempting to go around the world.

The Cospas-Sarsat system uses a constellation of satellites in low and geostationary orbits to detect and locate emergency beacons on vessels and aircraft in distress. NOAA represents the United States in this program, provides satellite platforms and ground equipment, and operates the U.S. Mission Control Center.

The signal from Mr. Fossett's Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) was first detected by NOAA's GOES-10 satellite at 14:23 Greenwich Mean Time. The signal was processed by a ground station in Canada and relayed to the U.S. Mission Control Center in Suitland, MD. Within four minutes, the mission control center sent out an alert message to the U.S. Coast Guard, based on the EPIRB's registration data. The Coast Guard notified the Solo Spirit Mission Control in St. Louis, MO, who in turn contacted the Australian search and rescue forces.

The initial detection and subsequent detections from NOAA polar-orbiting satellite passes allowed rescue forces to locate and pick up Mr. Fossett. At 16:02 GMT, location information was available on both the EPIRBs carried by the "Solo Spirit" via NOAA-14, an environmental satellite operated by NOAA. Using the position information relayed by the NOAA satellite, the Australian rescue coordination center tasked aircraft from the Australian Air Force and the French Navy to locate the downed balloon.

NORTH AMERICAN DROUGHT DATA BASE ON LINE, NOAA ANNOUNCES

A new data base that will aid scientists in understanding drought is now on line, NOAA announced on August 5th. The data base focuses on drought variability in North America for the past 300 years. It combines data from weather instruments for the past 100 years with a network of drought records reconstructed from tree ring chronologies dating from 1700.

"The new data base allows an assessment of the magnitude and general spatial patterns of drought across the United States for each year back to 1700," said Jonathan T. Overpeck, head of NOAA's Paleoclimatology Program. "These reconstructions also enable an assessment of the severity of 20th century droughts in the context of the past three centuries. For example, when the extreme 1950s drought is compared with other droughts in the past 300 years, reconstructions suggest that a drought that occurred around 1820 was similar in length, and perhaps greater in severity and spatial extent." The new Web site is located at: <http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/paleo/drought.html>

NOAA AND NASA TO CONTINUE COLLABORATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

NOAA and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) have signed an agreement which enables the agencies to continue collaborating on environmental programs, including environmental satellite programs.

The agreement continues a history of interagency cooperation and reaffirms the need for the specialized technical, scientific and operational expertise of both agencies to enhance this country's capabilities to forecast environmental conditions and better understand our global environment. It is the third basic agreement that NOAA (and its predecessor agencies) and NASA have signed since 1964.

NOAA's mission is to describe and predict changes in the Earth's environment, and conserve and manage wisely the nation's coastal and marine resources to ensure sustainable economic opportunities. NOAA operates the environmental satellites known as Geostationary Operational Environmental Satellite (GOES) and Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite (POES), which are critical for weather forecasting, climate prediction, and other environmental uses.

NASA conducts aeronautical and space research activities, develops new technologies to support NASA's research programs, and facilitates the transition of those technologies to NOAA when appropriate. NASA develops and procures the GOES and POES satellites on behalf of NOAA.

The agreement recognizes each agency's mission and provides a framework for collaboration. Projects to be pursued together are those that are of mutual benefit to NOAA and NASA, result in cost-savings to the U.S. government, or better enable the agencies to accomplish program objectives.

The goals of joint projects include improving the knowledge of environmental processes, improving the capabilities of satellite systems, and reducing costs for new satellite systems.

The agreement was signed on June 17th by the Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Dr. D. James Baker and NASA Administrator Daniel Goldin.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ASSESSMENT OF ORLANDO TORNADES COMPLIMENTS EMERGENCY MANAGERS, NOTES WARNING COMPLEXITIES

Praising Florida's emergency management community for its excellent warning coordination efforts during February's tornado outbreak in the central part of the state, a National Weather Service assessment team noted on June 23rd, that a transient population of wintertime visitors is particularly vulnerable in severe weather situations.

Assessment Team Leader Lynn P. Maximuk, meteorologist in charge of the National Weather Service's Kansas City forecast office, reported that the team recommends enhancing efforts to increase public tornado awareness in Florida. Partnerships between the National Weather Service, emergency managers and the media could make the state's tornado preparedness equal to that for hurricanes. The team also recom-

mends continued NOAA Weather Radio promotion efforts to further ensure public safety.

While coordination between the Weather Service, emergency management, and broadcast media in providing warning information to the public was excellent, Maximuk said, the timing of the tornado strikes and a blended population of full-time and seasonal residents posed a serious challenge. He said the team interviewed many seasonal residents who had heard tornado warnings issued by the Weather Service. Most took no protective actions because they weren't sure where they were located in relation to where tornadoes were reported, or were not aware of local places in which to seek adequate shelter in mobile home and RV parks.

NOAA TAKES OVER CONTROL OF ALL DEFENSE METEOROLOGICAL SATELLITES

On May 29th, the National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS) officially assumed full command and control of all assets of the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) from the U.S. Air Force. Ceremonies marking the official hand-over of control of the DMSP satellites took place at the U.S. Air Force Space Command in Colorado Springs and was attended by Robert Winokur, Assistant Administrator for Satellite and Information Services.

The assumption of command and control of the DMSP satellites by NESDIS marks a very significant milestone in the process of the integration of all civilian and military weather satellites into one program, the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS). The next significant step in this process will be the launch of a European meteorological satellite, planned for 2003, which will become the third satellite in the three satellite NPOESS constellation. The culmination of the integration process will be the launch of the first NPOESS satellite, anticipated to take place in 2007 or 2008 (the satellites now in polar orbit were launched separately by the Air Force and by NOAA).

DIRECTOR OF MEXICAN DISASTER AGENCY THANKS NOAA FOR SATELLITE CONTRIBUTION TO EFFORTS TO TRACK AND TO DETECT SERIOUS WILDFIRES; VISITS NOAA SCIENCE CENTER

On June 10th, Dr. Roberto Meli Piralla, Director, Centro Nacional De Prevención De Desastres (CENAPRED) toured the NOAA Science Center, which is located at the World Weather Building in Suitland, MD, and houses various offices of NESDIS, and the National Center for Environmental Prediction (NCEP). Dr. Meli participated in discussions to explore whether CENAPRED should consider implementing procedures of using satellites for early detection of fires and smoke plumes.

NOAA's role in the federal interagency task force on the Mexican wildfires consisted of providing satellite imagery on a near real-time basis to Mexico and other nations, weather forecasting, smoke monitoring and movements, and experimental atmospheric aerosol concentration measurements. The Government of Mexico and the interagency task force have both expressed their appreciation and gratitude for NOAA's contributions to the firefighting efforts.

HEARING AND MARKUPS

NOAA TESTIFIES BEFORE SENATE PANEL ON ALGAL BLOOM DAMAGE AND GULF OF MEXICO HYPOXIA

Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Terry Garcia testified on May 20th before the Senate Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries (Chairman Olympia Snowe, R-ME). The hearing focused on S 1480, the Harmful Algal Bloom Research and Control Act of 1997 and the issue of hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico which has created a "dead zone," void of normal marine plant and animal species. Mr. Garcia testified that: "Coastal hypoxia and harmful blooms are increasing. Where they occur, resources are being negatively impacted, human health is threatened, and coastal economies are suffering."

"Nowhere is the hypoxia problem more apparent than in the northern Gulf of Mexico. Known locally as the "dead zone", an area roughly the size of New Jersey, becomes hypoxic each summer off the Louisiana coast. This zone doubled in size to 11,200 square kilometers after the "Great Mississippi River Flood of 1993", and since then its summer extent has not appreciably diminished. Scientists...have determined that the dominant cause of this hypoxic zone was nutrient loading from the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers."

Mr. Garcia recommended that funding levels contained in Chairman Snowe's bill be revised to reflect the \$22 million NOAA Fiscal Year 1999 Clean Water Initiative budget request and the President's request for \$12 million to reduce polluted runoff in coastal areas. Mr. Garcia appeared on a panel with Suzanne Schwartz, Director of the Oceans and Coastal Protection Division, Environmental Protection Agency.

HOUSE RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE HOLDS HEARING ON POLISH AND LATVIAN FISHING AGREEMENT AND REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NORTHWEST ATLANTIC FISHERIES CONVENTION ACT (NAFO) AND THE ATLANTIC TUNAS CONVENTION ACT

The House Resources Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife And Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Jim Saxton, R-NJ) held a May 19th hearing on Governing International Fisheries Agreements (GIFAs) with Latvia (HR 3460) and Poland (HR 3461). The Latvian GIFA also included language to reauthorize the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Convention Act and the Atlantic Tunas Convention Act. Dr. Evans explained that "GIFA partners are permitted to send processing vessels into U.S. waters to receive U.S.-harvested fish under joint venture arrangements..." At present, the only foreign fishing activity occurring within U.S. jurisdiction is joint venture processing of U.S.-harvested fish off the northeast coast. We have permitted joint venture processing for northwest Atlantic mackerel and herring by two processing vessels from Estonia and two others from Lithuania. Russia is preparing an application for one additional vessel. The total amount of fish available for these activities is 15,000 metric tons of mackerel and 40,000 metric tons of herring.

“Activities in the Northeast under these permits provide a small but important outlet for U.S. fishermen who are coping with our rebuilding programs for the groundfish stocks. They have enabled four U.S. vessels from the States of Massachusetts and New Jersey to harvest almost 2,000 metric tons of mackerel and almost 500 metric tons of herring worth \$375,000 and \$30,000, respectively. Our rebuilding programs are headed in the right direction, and, in the meantime, delivering product to foreign processing vessels has allowed U.S. fishermen to continue to earn income during the rebuilding period of the major U.S. stocks.”

Chairman Saxton was joined by Ranking Subcommittee Democrat Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-MD), who represents many Chesapeake Bay communities. Rep. Peter Deutsch (D-FL), a non-committee member, who also represents the Florida Keys, was invited to sit on the dais after he testified..

Other witnesses were Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO); Dr. David Evans, then Deputy Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, accompanied by Dr. Gary Matlock, Director of our Office of Sustainable Fisheries and Dr. Andrew Rosenberg, then Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Northeast Region and U.S. Commissioner to the Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO); Gary Taylor, Acting Assistant Director for External Affairs, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; Brian Hallman, Deputy Director for the Office of Marine Conservation, Department of State, Jacqueline Savitz, Executive Director, The Coast Alliance, and Jeff Pike, U.S. Commissioner to NAFO.

Chairman Saxton was the only member who commented on issues concerning the NMFS. There were no questions asked of Administration witnesses concerning GIFAs or reauthorization of the tunas convention or Northwest Atlantic fisheries. Later in the hearing, Mr. Saxton asked Commissioner Pike the role Congress should play in the furthering the effectiveness of NAFO. Mr. Pike replied that oversight would be invaluable, particularly as stocks recover and there is temptation to “open the floodgates” and overfish, once again.

NOAA TESTIFIES AT HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING ON U.S. OWNERSHIP OF COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSELS IN U.S. FISHERIES

Dr. David Evans, then Deputy Assistant Administrator Fisheries, testified on behalf of NOAA at a June 4th House Resources Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Jim Saxton, R-NJ) hearing. The subcommittee described the hearing as focusing whether the goals of Americanizing the U.S. fishing fleet and U.S. ownership of harvesting vessels have been achieved. These two goals have been identified as Congressional objectives in both the Magnuson-Stevens Act, as well as the Anti-Reflagging Act of 1987 (ARA). Sen. Ted Stevens (R-AK) was the initial witness and provided testimony that emphasized the need to reexamine a United States Coast Guard legal interpretation of the ARA that resulted in approximately 20 foreign rebuilt factory trawlers being provided U.S. fishery endorsements. All of these vessels currently participate in the

North Pacific groundfish fishery. Sen. Stevens' concern over the use of factory trawlers has resulted in his introduction of legislation, The American Fisheries Act (S 1221), that specifically addresses the participation of the foreign rebuilt factory trawlers, while eventually phasing out the use of all remaining factory trawlers.

In his testimony Dr. Evans initially discussed the growing concern over the issue of overcapacity and overcapitalization in U.S. fisheries, and applauded the Committee efforts to deal with these important issues. He went on to identify both domestic and international activities NOAA are undertaking to address these concerns. Dr. Evans then responded to the question of the level of U.S. fishing vessels harvest of U.S. fisheries.

Based on the very limited level of foreign fishing that has recently occurred under Governing International Fishery Agreements (GIFAs), being the only mechanism by which foreign fishing vessels can fish or process in the Exclusive Economic Zone of the United States (EEZ), Dr. Evans concluded that the Americanization of harvest of U.S. fisheries has been very successful. In regards to an analysis of U.S. ownership of the harvesting vessels, Dr. Evans stated that NOAA was not responsible for administering the provisions of the ARA, and indicated that the United States Coast Guard (USGC) was the appropriate agency to provide a response.

Dr. Evans did indicate that the Committee should consider discussing the potential trade implications of any revisions to vessel ownership provisions that may be under consideration.

Questions from members initially focused on the process by which the foreign rebuilt factory trawlers received their fishery endorsements. Fishery endorsements are issued by the USCG. Upon determination that a vessel meets all the legal documentation requirements required by U.S. fishing vessels, the Coast Guard issues it a fisheries endorsement. With an endorsement these vessel are eligible to apply for permits to participate in various fisheries around the nation. The questioning revolved around the rationale for the exemptions granted to the 20 foreign rebuilt vessels, some of which were substantially rebuilt.

Additional discussion focused on whether fishing permits are considered "rights" or "privileges." Dr. Evans indicated that the agency's legal determination is that fishing permits are privileges. Alternatively, some members of the Committee expressed their belief that fishing permits provided a right, and, therefore, any effort to revoke permits constituted a constitutional taking.

Other witness included representatives from the fishing industry, the Alaskan Community Development Quota community, a constitutional lawyer, and the environmental community.

NOAA TESTIFIES BEFORE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON STRIPED BASS BYCATCH IN SPINY DOGFISH FISHERY

Richard Schaefer, Chief of the Staff Office for Intergovernmental and Recreational Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) testified on behalf of NOAA at a June 11th House Resources Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife, and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman James Saxton, R-NJ) hearing. The hearing addressed the concerns raised by some in the recreational fishing community of excessive striped bass bycatches in ocean gill-net fisheries directed primarily at the spiny dogfish.

Mr. Schaefer described the actions taken by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) along with member states to ascertain the validity of bycatch concerns. Mr. Schaefer suggested that fears of excessive striped bass bycatch are not well grounded based on data available at this time. Furthermore, Mr. Schaefer did, however, note that "commercial bycatches are not resulting in excessive striped bass mortalities." He added, though, that while striped bass bycatch is not currently a problem, the NMFS Office of Intergovernmental and Recreational Fisheries currently is in the process of formulating a sampling design for observers in the gill-net fisheries.

Mr. Schaefer concluded by discussing the spiny dogfish stock which "has been declared to be overfished and that a significant reduction in fishing mortality from the 1996 fishing level is needed to rebuild the stock in ten years, as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act." It is likely that efforts to halt overfishing would "result in a decrease in the directed spiny dogfish fishery and, consequently, reductions in striped bass bycatch."

Also appearing were witnesses from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, Raytheon Corp., and commercial fishers. They provided similar testimony — the current level of striped bass bycatch in the spiny dogfish gillnet fishery is minimal and is in no way endangering the health of the striped bass population.

Following the testimony, Chairman Saxton and Ranking Democrat Rep. Frank Pallone (NJ) asked several questions. Chairman Saxton noted that several witnesses stated that the data on striped bass bycatch came primarily from research programs addressing other issues. Mr. Schaefer replied that this is currently true but that NMFS has just initiated a directed study on striped bass bycatch through the Northeast Fisheries Science Center. Mr. George Lapointe, Director, Interstate Fisheries Management Program, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, also pointed out that the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program, a joint program between the states, ASMFC, NMFS, and the USFWS, will address bycatch in a holistic manner and provide a better picture of bycatch for all east coast fisheries, not just for dogfish and striped bass.

Chairman Saxton also asked Mr. Lapointe to clarify his statement that bycatch mortality from the recreational fishery exceeds the, mortality from the entire directed commercial fishery. Mr. Lapointe replied that this is true; the large number of recreational anglers that pursue striped bass combined with the fact that eight percent of striped bass die after release, result in a greater overall mortality than that for the entire directed commercial harvest. Rep. Pallone ended the hearing by asking NMFS who is to blame for the current status of dogfish. Mr. Schaefer replied that both the management councils and NMFS share the blame.

DR. BAKER ANNOUNCES TO HOUSE RESOURCES SUBCOMMITTEE OF STEPPED UP INDIAN AND ATLANTIC OCEAN EL NINO AND CLIMATE MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The House Resources Subcommittee on Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans (Chairman Jim Saxton, R-NJ) held a July 30th hearing to discuss various ocean observing systems on both local and global scales.

The Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere, Dr. D. James Baker, testified on NOAA's efforts in these areas. Dr. Baker explained to the subcommittee the details surrounding the initiatives announced by the President and Vice President at the National Ocean Conference. He also discussed the ENSO Observing System, the recent El Nino and the upcoming La Nina. In addition, he talked about the excellent work NOAA is accomplishing through the National Undersea Research Program (NURP) program with the Aquarius habitat in Florida and the Long-term Environmental Observatory (LEO) in New Jersey and the fascinating discoveries NOAA is making through the VENTS program in the North Pacific Fishery. In his written comments, Dr. Baker said: "despite our recent success in predicting long-range climatic events, including the current El Nino event we predicted many months in advance, we still have far to go."

"A focused extension of observations into the eastern Indian Ocean is also needed. Many scientists think that westerly wind bursts from the Indian Ocean may somehow trigger the onset of El Nino. There is considerable evidence that the sea surface temperature variability there influences the Asian/Australian monsoons." The Atlantic Ocean, Dr. Baker said, "may be coupled to create a climate influence of great importance to the United States, particularly the eastern U.S. The so-called North Atlantic Oscillation (NAO) and the Tropical Atlantic Variability (TAV) unquestionably affect our climate, but we do not understand how. The first step in understanding these Atlantic regimes is to establish an observing system, similar to the one we have in the Pacific. Over the next two years, data from the Atlantic pilot array, will be analyzed to assess long-term observational requirements for the Atlantic."

Dr. Baker also discussed the importance of international cooperation in global ocean observation efforts by highlighting such programs as the Global Ocean Data Assimilation Experiment (GODAE) and Climate Variability and Predictability (CLIVAR).

NOAA FISHERIES TESTIFIES AT PENDLETON, OREGON, HEARING ON MANAGEMENT OF THE COLUMBIA AND SNAKE RIVERS

Danny Consenstein, Columbia River Coordinator for the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Northwest Region, testified before the Senate Energy Subcommittee on Water and Power (Chairman Jon Kyl, R-AZ) on August 4th in Pendleton, OR on S 2111, a bill introduced by Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR). S 2111 could effectively remove NMFS as final arbiter of salmon recovery decisions on the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The bill calls on the Department of Interior to appoint members of an advisory committee that has significant industry participation, and asks the Office of Management and Budget to designate an official to reconcile differences between the Federal agencies. Sen. Gordon Smith was the only Member in attendance. Other witnesses included Col. Mogren from the Army Corps of Engineers; former U.S. Senator James McClure, who now works for the Competitive Market Coalition; Dave Nelson of Oregon's state legislature; Louise Solliday from Oregon Governor Kitzhaber's office, representatives from the Umatilla and Coeur d'Alene tribes, and a sportsfishing representative. Ms. Solliday spoke about the Oregon Plan and how it deals with stakeholder, but she did not provide testimony that related specifically to the bill.

NMFS was clearly the target at the hearing, with many people at the hearing being from Pendleton, and very supportive of the Senator's position. They share his view that NMFS officials are, in effect, nameless, faceless, un-elected bureaucrats that were trying to take away their livelihoods. In his opening remarks, Mr. Consenstein noted that he was just in Pendleton a few months ago looking at the Umatilla project. There is an effort between the tribes, the Bureau of Reclamation, and irrigation districts to restore the salmon on the Umatilla River, without negative economic impacts, he explained. Mr. Consenstein lauded it as a model for the larger Columbia and Snake Basins. Sen. Smith questioned NMFS on what its goal for salmon recovery was and how it would be met; on its approach to state laws that govern timber harvesting in Oregon; on the amount of salmon mortality that occurs in the ocean and why inland people must undertake measures to correct for that mortality; and on the ability of NMFS to "take" water to provide flow for the fish.

The Senator raised the issue of the Senate appropriations language put in by Sen. Slade Gorton (R-WA) giving Congress authority over dam operations, and asked if NMFS would work on that idea. NMFS answered that it had concerns that the language would limit existing authority. In addition, as a legal and practical matter, NMFS does not need new legislative language. Mr. Consenstein said that Congress would, of course, be involved in any major changes to the operation of the two rivers.

Sen. Gordon Smith also held a July 14th Subcommittee hearing in Washington, DC on this bill. At that hearing, the Oregon Republican said that the bill was neither an endorsement or rejection of the Three Sovereigns - a decision-making process currently being set up by the Federal government, the states, and the tribes. He was concerned that people do

not have a voice in the process, and that the NMFS has veto power over decisions. Sens. Gorton and Larry Craig (R-ID) voiced similar concerns. Sen. Wyden wanted the region to get its act together, or else have to live with an approach designed by the Federal government. Sen. Wyden wanted to reconcile Sen. Gordon Smith's proposals with other ideas on a public process put forward by Oregon Governor Kitzhaber.

NOAA APPEARS BEFORE OCEANS ACT AND COASTAL WATER QUALITY ISSUES HEARING

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere Sally Yozell testified on August 6th before the House Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment (Chairman Sherwood Boehlert, R-NY) of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The hearing focused on HR 2094, the Beaches Environmental Assessment, Closure and Health Act, and S 1213 and HR 3445, the Oceans Act.

In her testimony, Ms. Yozell said, "An alarming 40 percent of the Nation's water is unfit for swimming or fishing. Last year, pollution caused over 4,000 beach closings and warnings -- polluted runoff is causing toxic algal blooms which are contaminating our coasts with red and brown tides, paralytic shellfish, and *Pfiesteria*, all of which affect the health of our citizens, fisheries, and coastal communities.

Ms. Yozell discussed with the Subcommittee the plans set forth by the Administration to deal with these problems under the Clean Water Action Plan. She talked about NOAA's role in coastal ocean monitoring and assessment activities. Her testimony noted that the human health impacts of coastal water quality, like those addressed in the legislation, fall under the jurisdiction of the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) and deferred to it for further comments on the bill. EPA strongly supported the beaches legislation.

Ms. Yozell emphasized the need for passage of the Oceans Act by the House but noted that the Administration would like to see some changes. She said that, "Most importantly, we urge that all states, as defined in the legislation, fall under the purview of the [National Ocean] Commission. The exemption of states with coastal watersheds is a serious flaw in the bill and will not allow the Commission to examine fully our current ocean policies." Alaska and Idaho are exempt from the current House legislation.

She concluded "The establishment of a National Ocean Commission will help highlight and prioritize the direction of our future national efforts to reap the benefits of the ocean and its resources as we work to preserve ocean uses and resources for future generations."

Rep. Vito Fossella (R-NY) asked Ms. Yozell if she thought that the scope of the Commission should cover marine transportation and other issues under the jurisdiction of the Committee. Ms. Yozell answered that all domestic ocean issues should be studied by the Commission. Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ) asked Ms. Yozell if the predicted outbreak of *Pfiesteria* in the Chesapeake Bay could affect New Jersey. Ms. Yozell answered that the Northeast suffered from its own problems, including red and brown tides, and that the cause of fish lesions in Maryland was not yet fully understood, but that

NOAA was working to find out the exact cause.

Earlier in the hearing, Rep. Sam Farr (D-CA) and James Saxton (R-NJ), Chairman of the Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee, testified in support of the Oceans Act. Rep. Saxton noted that if the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee did not request sequential referral of the legislation, the House version of the Oceans Act probably would be taken up by the full House when it returns in early September. Chairman Boehlert assured Rep. Saxton that the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee supports passage of the Oceans Act and that it would not be an impediment.

NOAA FISHERIES TESTIFIES AT HOUSE FIELD HEARING ON LEGISLATION TO TRANSFER NOAA ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT AUTHORITY TO THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE; PROPOSAL CALLED DISRUPTIVE AND DELAY CAUSING

Will Stelle, Jr., Northwest Regional Administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), testified at a September 2nd House Resources Committee (Chairman Don Young, R-AK) on a bill to transfer NOAA's Endangered Species Act (ESA) enforcement authority to the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The legislation, HR 4335, the Endangered Species Consolidation Act was introduced by Chairman Young on July 24th.

In his written statement, Mr. Stelle said "shifting NMFS' ESA responsibilities to FWS would create confusion and delays that could last for years....If NMFS's ESA responsibilities were transferred to FWS, they would have to repeat what we did—organize to get the job done, locate and train new staff, find space, and request appropriations." Mr. Stelle estimated that it would cost the FWS about \$16.5 million just to manage the transfer of responsibilities in addition to 150 new personnel. "The confusion and delays associated with the transfer you propose would create major inconveniences and delays to private landowners, fishing communities, and timber interests—all whose lives are affected by listed salmon. It would, therefore, substantially disrupt ongoing efforts throughout the Pacific Northwest in salmon recovery at the worst possible time."

Mr. Stelle also testified at the panel's second day of hearings on the bill in Boise, ID on September 3d. He said that "shifting NMFS' ESA responsibilities to the FWS would create confusion and delays that could last for years."

UPCOMING HEARINGS NOAA TO TESTIFY BEFORE HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE AND AERONAUTICS

The Assistant Administrator of Satellite and Information Services, Robert Winokur, has been invited to testify before a House Science Subcommittee on Space and Aeronautics (Chairman Dana Rohrabacher, R-CA) September 10th hearing on "Delays in NASA's Earth Science Enterprise." Mr. Winokur is expected to testify on NOAA's role in the Earth Science

Enterprise Earth Observing System Data Information System; (2) NOAA's responsibilities in the archive storage and retrieval of this data; (3) significant schedule milestones that face NOAA in the performance of these roles; and (4) any challenges currently facing NOAA in the long-term storage and retrieval of existing archived data.

HOUSE FISHERIES CONSERVATION SUBCOMMITTEE SCHEDULES HEARING IN ANTICIPATION OF REAUTHORIZATION OF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARIES ACT IN THE 106TH CONGRESS

The House Fisheries Conservation, Wildlife and Oceans Subcommittee (Chairman Jim Saxton, R-NJ) has scheduled a September 22nd hearing on the National Marine Sanctuary Public/Private Research Partnerships. It is believed that the hearing was scheduled to establish a record in anticipation of the reauthorization next year of the National Marine Sanctuaries Act Reauthorization of 1996 (PL 104-283) which expires September 30, 1999. The NOAA witness has not yet been designated. It is anticipated that Dr. Sylvia Earle, former NOAA Chief Scientist, will be asked to discuss the Sustainable Seas Expedition. There is also likely to be a witness from the Cambrian Foundation to discuss the recent *U.S.S. Monitor* expedition, in addition witnesses knowledgeable about the Monterey Bay and Flower Garden Bank National Marine Sanctuaries. The hearing is also expected to be combined with the *National Geographic's* Blue Refuges exhibit.

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LEGISLATION INTRODUCED

Sen. John Chafee (R-RI), on May 20th, S 2095 to reauthorize and amend the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Establishment Act.

Rep. Rob Portman (R-OH), on May 20th, HR 3921 to improve the effectiveness and performance of federal financial assistance programs, simplify federal financial assistance application and reporting requirements, and improve the delivery of services to the public.

Sen. Gordon Smith (R-OR), on May 21st, S 2111 to establish the conditions under which the Bonneville Power Administration and certain federal agencies may enter into a memorandum of agreement concerning management of the Columbia/Snake River Basin, to direct the secretary of the Interior to appoint an advisory committee to make recommendations re-

garding activities under the memorandum of understanding, and for other purposes.

Rep. Joel Hefley (R-CO), on May 22nd, HR 3962 to provide for the ratification of payments made under preexisting on-shore and offshore royalty-in-kind programs.

Rep. Owen Pickett (D-VA), on May 22nd, HR 3972 to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit the secretary of the Interior from charging state and local government agencies for certain uses of the sand, gravel, and shell resources of the outer Continental Shelf.

Rep. Frank Riggs (R-CA), on May 22nd, HR 3973 to reauthorize and amend the Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Management Act of 1984.

Rep. Peter Deutsch (D-FL), on June 11th, HR 4047 to authorize the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency to make grants to the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority and other appropriate agencies for the purpose of improving water quality throughout the marine ecosystem of the Florida Keys.

Rep. Ralph Hall (D-TX), on June 12th, HRes 469 expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding assistance to Mexico to combat wildfires.

Rep. Don Young (R-AK), on June 15th, HRes 470 to express the sense of the House of Representatives regarding actions to stop the poaching of valuable marine resources and use of illegal high seas driftnets in the Bering Sea.

Sen. Judd Gregg (R-NH), on June 16th, S 2172 to authorize the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish a whale conservation fund, and for other purposes.

Rep. John Doolittle (R-CA), on June 18th, HR 4079 to authorize the construction of temperature control devices at Folsom Dam in California.

Sen. Robert Torricelli (D-NJ), on June 22nd, S 2199 to amend the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 to establish a Marine Mammal Rescue Grant Program, and for other purposes.

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Sen. Paul Sarbanes (D-MD), on June 25th, S 2218 to require the Secretary of the Army, acting through the Chief of Engineers, to evaluate, develop, and implement a strategic master plan for States on the Atlantic Ocean to address problems associated with toxic microorganisms in tidal and non-tidal wetlands and waters.

Sen. Bob Graham (D-FL), on June 25th, S 2225 to amend the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to prohibit new leasing activities in certain areas off the coast of Florida, and to permit exploration, production, or drilling activities on existing leases only if adequate studies are performed, to require adequate information and analyses for development and production activities, and to allow states full review of development and production activities.

Sen. John Kerry (D-MA), on June 26th, S 2256 to provide an authorized strength for commissioned officers of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Corps, and for other purposes.

Rep. James Saxton (R-NJ), on June 25th, HR 4180 entitled "American Fisheries Act of 1998".

Rep. Christopher John (D-LA), on July 16th, HR 4235 entitled "Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Research and Control Act of 1998".

Rep. Rick White (R-WA), on July 21st, HR 4294 entitled "Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act Amendment".

Rep. Don Young (R-AK), on July 24th, HR 4335 entitled "Endangered Species Consolidation Act".

Sen. Olympia Snowe (R-ME), on July 27th, S 2360 entitled "NOAA Authorization Act of 1998".

Rep. Ron Paul (R-TX), on August 6th, HR 4423 to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to provide that the Gulf of Mexico red snapper fishery shall be managed in accordance with such fishery management plans, regulations and other conservation and management as applied to that fishery on April 13, 1998.

Rep. James Saxton (R-NJ), on August 6th, HR 4500 entitled "The Atlantic Swordfish Management Improvement Act".

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